

I am proud and humbled to be here today, to stand again with Mitch Daniels as his partner, and accept the trust of the people of Indiana for another four years.

It's no secret that I love Indiana. It's my home down to the very last blade of grass, and I am fiercely proud of where we are and who we are as Hoosiers. We're not the largest, nor the most powerful state in the union. We don't necessarily have the loudest voices or the most recognizable faces. But we are a force to be reckoned with, and we have made our faces known around the world. We are the strong and the stalwart. We are the rough and the ready.

Our neighbors have lost sight of land. While we wish no ill will on our neighboring states, their choices have tossed them into a sea of red. They're waving for a lifeline, for some reason to hope in the future again. But

“Hoosiers are standing firmly on a bedrock of black – through strong fiscal governance, responsibility and good stewardship.”

Our choices have given us a strong position to weather the storm around us. We're getting wet, but we're not drowning!

I pledge to you to do everything in my power to keep Indiana on solid ground. The Governor and I know that is our first responsibility. And we intend, not only to see Indiana keep it's economic footing, but to gain ground as well.

We're faced with a new year, with new challenges and new beginnings. I know Hoosiers are ready.

“And we have one thing on our side that the rest of the country is looking for. We have the strength of character and spirit of ingenuity that have already made us rich beyond our means.”

I have found great inspiration in the strength of our people. Growing up in rural Indiana, I've seen that strength in my family—my parents and sister and extended family, many of them here today. I've seen that strength in my husband, Steve, and our son, Aaron. And I've seen it in countless Hoosiers. It's a willingness to give even when they lack, to help even when they feel weak and to move forward even when they are more comfortable staying put.

And the only way to move, is forward. We have many unknowns before us. There is certainty, however, that the comfort of the status quo will not be good enough to meet our needs. We must continue to pursue opportunities and when none are to be found, it is up to us to create opportunity.

“We must keep our taxes low, keep our doors open to business and keep our sights set on the economic health of our state.”

Indiana will stand strong in the tempest around us, if commitment, discipline and perseverance are our guides.

In the face of difficulty and challenge, we must be bold and take action. Hoosiers are the most creative, the most innovative in times of greatest need. And I have the greatest confidence that the months ahead will prove us to be the strong and stalwart, rough and ready people I know we are.

We will do more than survive the storm. We will gain from it. Today, you have my pledge to serve in a way that will bring honor to our state and opportunity to all Hoosiers.

